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EDITORIAL COMMENT



RED CROSS NURSING AND CENTRAL DIRECTORIES

THE first regular meeting of the Committee on Nursing Service of the National Red Cross was held at the home of Mrs. William K. Draper, in New York, on the evening of January 20. Of the fifteen members, eight were present, as follows: Miss Delano, president, Mrs. Draper, secretary, Mrs. Robb, Misses Maxwell, Palmer, Nichols, Cooke (representing Miss Pepoon of California), and Major Lynch, U. S. A. Previous to the meeting, the ladies were Mrs. Draper's guests at a very delightful dinner.

Miss Delano submitted an outline of rules, which had been compiled informally by Miss Boardman, Miss Nevins, Major Lynch of the army, Surgeon Bell of the navy, and herself, from the forms in use in several states, and these were discussed, altered, and adopted, with due regard for parliamentary procedure, and after being submitted to those members who were absent will be printed in the JOURNAL.

A matter which gave rise to much anxious discussion was the difficulty of reaching the enrolled nurses promptly in an emergency. The necessity was again demonstrated of the need of central registries in every large centre, under the supervision of persons who would co-operate intelligently with headquarters at Washington when nurses were needed for Red Cross service. Except in a few cities where central registries conducted by nursing organizations already exist, such as the Boston Nurses' Club, the Graduate Nurses' Association of Cleveland, and others, effective nursing service for the Red Cross would seem for the time being to be greatly handicapped, adding one more reason for haste in promoting the central registry idea by state and county associations.

Taken as a whole, the meeting of the committee was very satisfactory. Miss Delano's practical knowledge of Red Cross work and her close

touch with nursing affairs make her a most efficient and inspiring leader during this difficult period of organization. The attitude of the National Red Cross management is that of freedom of action towards the Committee on Nursing Service, and like many of our great nursing problems the solution is in the hands of nurses, if they will grasp the opportunity. The co-operation needed now without delay is the establishment in every large centre of a central directory, governed by a state or county society when possible, or by a graduate or registered nurses' association, making such a registry the headquarters for all nursing interests of the community.

Every year brings its own problems. Developments would seem to show that Red Cross nursing service and central registries governed by nurses for nurses are inseparable, and that they are the most vital questions before the nursing world to-day.

THE JOURNAL AND THE PRIVATE DUTY NURSE

EVER since this JOURNAL came into existence the needs of the great body of private duty nurses have been made a special study by the editorial staff. Not a number has gone out that has not contained something of value to our readers in that branch of work. By far the heaviest proportion of our correspondence has been in their interest. The isolation and difficulties of their lives have not been lost sight of, nor the fact forgotten that with each new case, year in and year out, the private duty nurse subordinates her personal affairs and loses herself, if we may use the expression, in the interests of the patient and the household she is serving, in surroundings often uncongenial and not infrequently uncomfortable.

When she has a few days to spare in what she calls her home, usually little more than the place where she keeps her necessary belongings, she must mend and replenish her wardrobe and attend to the needs of those dependent upon her, whether at hand or at a distance. She naturally craves in these intervals the society of her personal friends, a breath of fresh air, a good play, some really good music, or an absorbing novel that takes her out of herself while her body rests. When these natural duties and cravings have been attended to, there is little time and perhaps less inclination, as we know from experience, for professional reading, and she naturally wants such matter condensed, clear, and to the point.

How to give it to her as she wants it, knowing her manner of life, is our problem. If we could consider her as a unit, dissociated from other workers of her kind, this would be simple, our pages could be filled with abstracts from medical books and magazines, we could look

upon her as one nurse described herself, as one wishing to be constantly reminded "of the things I learned in Clara Weeks and have forgotten."

This cannot be done, for her own good. We live in an age when the practical experience of our fellow workers is essential for progress, when organization is imperative for protection, and these require reciprocity, give and take, give as well as take. The sharing of the knowledge that has been gained in her work with others is as necessary for self-development and for the development of the profession as is the openness of mind that is needed for receiving suggestions. It was to meet this need of a means for the interchange of expressions and ideas for mutual assistance in all lines of nursing work that the Associated Alumnae authorized the establishment of this magazine, and for the maintenance of the part devoted to the interests of the private duty nurses we must look to those nurses themselves. Papers written by hospital workers about private duty are not usually practical or helpful. The simplest account of one's actual work, written by the worker, is of greater value.

We want to remind those who feel that the entire magazine should be given over to their affairs that such an attitude would not serve their own best interests even if it were possible to carry out such a programme. There are certain needs of the training schools and hospital workers to be met, and that ever-increasing body of welfare nurses, engaged in tuberculosis, school, or visiting nursing, must have a place in our pages. The private nurse of to-day may find herself to-morrow an applicant in some one of these other departments of nursing and it behooves her to keep in touch with the trend of affairs in the whole nursing world.

WHAT WE ASK

We are asking three things of the private duty nurses at this time.

1. Tell us what you want to hear about and, when it is possible, tell us whom you would like to have write articles on special subjects. Dr. Potter's valuable paper on menstruation in this magazine, and the series on obstetrical diet lists, which will run through two or more numbers of the JOURNAL, are the result of direct requests from readers. Responses to such requests often come from workers in the field who would be quite overcome if asked to write "an article for the JOURNAL."
2. Send us sketches of special cases or experiences that contain some new nursing suggestions. These may be written in pencil in rough form as material to be put into shape for publication; they need not bear the name of the author if this is not desired though this must always accompany the contribution.
3. Send us friendly helpful criticism of the JOURNAL, either confidentially to the editor-in-chief, or for publication in the

letter department. By friendly criticism we do not mean praise, though this is always appreciated, or such comments as we publish in the letter department this month under the heading "By Way of Contrast," thereby breaking our rule not to use any anonymous material, but it is helpful to the editors to know what our readers have found of benefit and what they want to see further; such comments will be received in the spirit in which they are sent.

GOOD THINGS AHEAD

WE have been taken somewhat to task for not publishing a paper on hook-worm disease. The trouble is we were almost ahead of the hook-worm itself in this country, and our critics have forgotten the excellent article on "Uncinariasis" by Esther V. Hasson, written from Panama, which appeared in the JOURNAL for June, 1907. This article was so complete in its scope that nothing has been added to our knowledge by the articles that have appeared in the magazines of late. For those who have no file of the JOURNAL to turn back to, we shall publish shortly another article on the hook-worm, more condensed in form, which we have gladly received from a Pennsylvania nurse.

Newspapers and medical magazines have also been full of pellagra and we have been urged to quote from these, but except in Notes from the Medical Press we have not done so, preferring to wait for first-hand knowledge which we have just succeeded in obtaining. Miss Talcott, a graduate of the Illinois Training School, who is in charge of the nursing at the Peoria State Hospital, has had under her observation many cases of pellagra. A special study of these has been made and she is preparing an article for us which will be illustrated and full of detailed information.

The articles on building a nurses' home will be invaluable to superintendents who are thinking of such work. Miss Scovil has written for us in her charming way a paper on the moral influence of superintendents and head nurses. We have a practical paper on vomiting at hand, and several short sketches containing practical suggestions to the nurses in various lines of work, Miss Hamman is preparing an article on fireless cooking, while a little story of The Labrador will serve to lighten more serious contributions.

At the opening of last year so much material came to us from the Tuberculosis Congress and other conventions that we were obliged to refuse many papers read at local and state meetings. We see our way for the coming year to publish many such and would be glad to have them submitted to us for consideration.

VITAL STATISTICS

THE Board of JOURNAL Directors, at a meeting held in January, decided to make an effort to secure vital statistics of the nursing profession. It is probable that leaflets with questions will be sent to each *alumnæ* association for data from which to make up estimates on certain subjects, such as hours of duty, income, the effect of the cost of living on nurses' savings, length of active service in the profession, causes of death. Before such a circular of inquiry is sent out further suggestions are asked for from those interested. These should be sent to the JOURNAL office at Rochester before the first of April.

HOW TO TRANSFER JOURNAL STOCK

AT the annual meeting of JOURNAL stockholders, held in New York on January 20, the gift of seven shares from various associations was announced, while the representatives present from a number of other associations indicated their willingness to sell their shares when the Associated *Alumnæ* shall be ready to purchase them. The president of the JOURNAL Company has asked us to explain how such transfers should be made.

Transfers of stock have to be made on the books of the Company and, whether as a gift or by purchase, the method is the same. The name of the secretary of the Board of Directors of the AMERICAN JOURNAL OF NURSING COMPANY (Genevieve Cooke) is inserted in the first form on the back of the certificate of stock, as the attorney to act for the owner in making the transfer, and the certificate properly signed and witnessed should be forwarded to her at 615 Palisade Avenue, Yonkers, N. Y.

Gifts are shares purely voluntary and all the associations will not feel that they can give theirs, as they have need of the money represented in their home work and a number, we know, have invested their sick benefit funds in this way to help the JOURNAL cause and, of course, must receive the equivalent again. Roughly estimated, the amount yet to be raised is something less than \$4000.

" I KNOW A WOMAN "

AT a meeting of a local branch of the Consumers' League we recently heard a speaker of national repute as an investigator beg her auditors not to judge of certain economic conditions as a whole by the single instance or two which had come under their own observation, but to trust to the opinions of experts whose judgment rested upon the investiga-

tion of hundreds of cases, and which was unbiased and fair. She called the jumping at conclusions a feminine trait and quoted a lecturer of note as saying that the most discouraging remark with which he could be greeted when he had finished an address was "But I know a woman," the speaker going on to disprove by one instance what he had been trying to teach from masses of evidence.

This may be a feminine trait, but from recent observation it seems not to be confined to women. In two papers read before public meetings by physicians within a few weeks several instances of unworthy conduct on the part of nurses have been used as illustrations. In one, the story was told of a nurse who was found smoking with her patient, although smoking for the patient had been forbidden. In the other, a nurse was found nude in a bathtub, "expatiating on her charms to the patient."

These revolting instances show a lack of innate good breeding on the part of the women, the responsibility for which goes back further than the hospital or training school, and which cannot be regulated by any system of state registration that does not require high entrance examinations for the school. The conclusion drawn by these physicians was that because of such isolated cases of misconduct the whole nursing profession is to be condemned and reorganized.

Such illustrations and such conclusions are frequent from those medical men who do not see or will not see that because of such unworthy members of the nursing body, the intelligent and self-respecting women have banded themselves together the world over to so establish standards of admission to training schools, of which state registration is one means, that the entrance of such women into our ranks may be made as difficult as possible.

We all need to beware of drawing hasty and unwarranted conclusions from "I know a nurse."

THE PLACE OF THE NURSE IN MODERN MEDICINE

The place which the trained nurse holds in the system of modern medicine is well expressed by Dr. Floyd M. Crandall in his work on "How to Keep Well."

"The system of trained nursing has had its influence upon the practice of medicine in rendering it more exact. The trained nurse is a trained observer, by whose aid the attending physician can obtain an understanding of an intricate case he could not otherwise gain. The presence of such an observer adds also to the safety of the patient as the case progresses. This training of the power to observe is one of the reasons for the prolonged course of education required of the nurse.

The details of handling and managing the patient and administering treatment could be learned in shorter time, but training of the observation is a slower process. Notwithstanding the unpleasant experiences of some families with indiscreet nurses, the trained nurse is a potent factor for good in our modern life."

PRACTICAL TRAINING FOR ORGANIZATION LIFE

IN Philadelphia, two training schools, the Presbyterian and the Pennsylvania, have united their senior classes into a nurses' club. The seniors of these schools come together once every two weeks, their superintendents being always present. They have formed an organization, the officers representing the different schools, they regularly conduct meetings, and are taking up for study, using the *JOURNAL* largely as a text-book, many of the subjects of public interest. The members of the club write papers and have opportunity to prepare themselves on their subjects. For instance, when they were studying tuberculosis, the nurse who was to write the paper was given time and opportunity to visit various institutions, dispensaries, and sanatoria. At first the pupils were a little awkward and embarrassed in presenting their themes or conducting the meetings, but now they are used to it, they do as well as any one could, and their superintendents are very proud of them.

Next to the local associations of superintendents, which are increasing so rapidly all over the country, we think this bringing together of pupils in training the most valuable step, as it tends to break down school lines which if too strongly fostered are obstructions to progress, and to create interest in our broader organization life.

COMPENSATION FOR WELFARE WORKERS

WE have, in Miss Cannon's paper on "Fair Compensation for Welfare Workers," an appeal for fair compensation or a living wage for social service workers. We have in Dr. Baker's address before the St. Luke's alumnae, reported under News Items, a similar appeal for the special class of school nurses. The February number of the Illinois *Quarterly* publishes an address given by Dr. Carl F. N. Sandberg before the training school of the Tabitha Hospital, Chicago, in which the pupils just ready to leave the hospital are urged to give heed to the necessity of insisting upon fair compensation for their services.

It is a new note to emanate from the medical profession, and is interesting because at the very time one of our most prominent welfare workers makes the plea her arguments are practically sustained by members of the medical profession in different sections of the country.

No one knows better than Miss Cannon the wear and tear of welfare work; she is one of our best authorities in this work, which is purely a charity. The modest compensation offered by most organizations wishing to employ nurses is, in our judgment, a greater obstacle to securing the right women than the far cry that nurses are not prepared or are not competent to undertake such work. At the same time that special training along these lines is being provided at Teachers' College, the public will need to be educated to the idea that the lives of nurses engaged in such work are at least of equal value to those they are sent out to serve, that their hours of labor must be reasonable, and that compensation provided must permit not only comfortable maintenance, but the possibility of laying by modest sums for the much-talked-of rainy day, which every worker has to keep in mind.

The people who support welfare work by their subscriptions go on living in comfort in their homes; they do not make what we call personal sacrifice. The nurse's contribution to the philanthropic side of welfare work is her personal service to those people who are ignorant, dirty, often ungrateful, or dangerously diseased. She should not be asked to give such service, to risk her health, and in addition receive less in the way of compensation than nurses working either in private duty or in institutions.

PROGRESS OF LEGISLATION

THE Massachusetts State Nurses' Association has brought out a little leaflet called *The Bulletin* which will be published from time to time for distribution among its members to stimulate interest and disseminate information regarding the work being done in the state. The association has again presented a bill to the legislature in which some concessions have been made which it is hoped will lead to success. We shall hope to publish the bill with a report of its successful passage in an early number of the JOURNAL.

The Illinois nurses are again in trouble with the governor, in whose hands rests the appointing power, as he declines to fill the vacancy caused by the expiration of the term of Miss Wheeler.

A bill to increase the efficiency of the Army Nurse Corps has passed both houses of Congress, with modifications, and as we go to press is in conference, with hopeful anticipations of its ultimate passage. In its original form it provides that the pay of nurses on service in the United States shall be fifty dollars per month during their first three years of active service, fifty-five dollars per month during their second three years, sixty dollars per month during their third three years, and sixty-

five dollars per month after nine years; that ten dollars per month additional to the rates hereinabove established shall be paid all nurses on service without the limits of the United States; that nurses may be assigned as chief nurses under regulations prescribed by the Secretary of War, and their pay while under such assignment may be increased by his authority by an additional amount not exceeding thirty dollars per month. As soon as the bill becomes a law, we shall publish it in full.

THE NATIONAL MEETINGS IN MAY

THE announcements, which we are able to give in this issue, of the plans which are being made for the meetings of the two national organizations afford an inadequate idea of what those meetings are to be, but, as all those who have had such work in hand very well know, it is impossible to publish the full programme until the very last minute. The fiftieth anniversary of the establishment of the first training school in England by Florence Nightingale, and the great attractions and advantages of New York City as a meeting place, will be of themselves a sufficient inducement to call out a large attendance.

It has been suggested that there should be an informal meeting of the "Immigrants," and if any one has the names and addresses of those who travelled together to San Francisco, she is asked to forward them to Mrs. Edith Baldwin Lockwood, Granby, Conn., who has volunteered to make the arrangements.

It occurs to us that an informal meeting of the pioneers in nursing work in this country would be wonderfully interesting, say those who were at work or in training during the ten years following the establishment of the first training school here.

The Jubilee sessions are to be held at Teachers' College, and those who have so faithfully contributed to the course in Hospital Economics will have the opportunity, perhaps for the first time, to see the setting of this course which their efforts have helped to maintain.